

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-07 PC-05 DHA-02 SSC-01

OMB-01 CU-04 COME-00 FRB-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06

CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 SCSE-00 SCA-01 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02

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TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, NI

SUBJECT: COMPLETE TEXT OF BRIG. MOHAMMEDS ADDRESS TO THE
NATION

REF: LAGOS 7254

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF BRIGADIER MURTALA RUFai MOHAMMEDS
SPEECH TO NATION SUMMARIZED REFTEL:

QTE FELLOW NIGERIANS, EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE
INDICATED THAT DESPITE OUR GREAT HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES,
THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO FULFILL THE LEGITIMATE
EXPECTATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE. NIGERIA HAS BEEN LEFT TO DRIFT.
THIS SITUATION, IF NOT ARRESTED, WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE RESULT-
ED IN CHAOS AND EVEN BLOODSHED. IN THE ENDEAVOUR TO BUILD A
STRONG, UNITED AND VIRILE NATION, NIGERIANS HAVE SHED MUCH
BLOOD: THE THROUGH OF FURTHER BLOODSHED, FOR WHATEVER REASONS,
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MUST, I AM SURE, BE REVOLTING TO OUR PEOPLE. THE ARMED FORCES,

HAVING EXAMINED THE SITUATION, CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT CERTAIN CHANGES WERE INEVITABLE.

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, THE AFFAIRS OF STATE, HITHERTO A COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY, BECAME CHARACTERISED BY LACK OF CONSULTATION, INDECISION, INDISCIPLINE AND EVEN NEGLECT. INDEED, THE PUBLIC AT LARGE BECAME DISILLUSIONED AND DISAPPOINTED BY THESE DEVELOPMENTS. THIS TREND WAS CLEARLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE PHILOSOPHY AND IMAGE OF A CORRECTIVE REGIME. UNKNOWN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE FEELING OF DISILLUSION WAS ALSO EVIDENT AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHOSE ADMINISTRATION WAS NEGLECTED BUT WHO, OUT OF SHEER LOYALTY TO THE NATION, AND IN THE HOPE THAT THERE WOULD BE A CHANGE, CONTINUED TO SUFFER IN SILENCE.

THINGS GOT TO A STAGE WHERE THE HEAD OF THE ADMINISTRATION BECAME VIRTUALLY INACCESSIBLE EVEN TO OFFICIAL ADVISERS: AND WHEN ADVICE WAS TENDERED, IT WAS OFTEN IGNORED.

RESPONSIBLE OPINION, INCLUDING ADVICE BY EMINENT NIGERIANS, TRADITIONAL RULERS, INTELLECTUALS, ETC., WAS SIMILARLY DISCARDED. THE LEADERSHIP, EITHER BY DESIGN OR DEFAULT HAD BECOME TOO INSENSITIVE TO THE TRUE FEELINGS AND YEARNINGS OF THE PEOPLE.

THE NATION WAS THUS BEING PLUNGED INEXORABLY INTO CHAOS. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT MATTERS COULD NOT, AND SHOULD NOT, BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE IN THIS MANNER, AND IN ORDER TO GIVE THE NATION A NEW LEASE OF LIFE, AND A SENSE OF DIRECTION, THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS WERE TAKEN:-

(1) THE REMOVAL OF GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON AS HEAD OF THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(2) THE RETIREMENT OF GENERAL YAKUBU GOWON FROM THE ARMED FORCES IN HIS PRESENT RANK OF GENERAL WITH FULL BENEFITS, IN RECOGNITION OF HIS PAST SERVICES TO THE NATION.

(3) GENERAL GOWON WILL BE FREE TO RETURN TO THE COUNTRY
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AS SOON AS CONDITIONS PERMIT: HE WILL BE FREE TO PURSUE ANY LEGITIMATE UNDERTAKINGS OF HIS CHOICE IN ANY PART OF THE COUNTRY. HIS PERSONAL SAFETY AND FREEDOM AND THOSE OF HIS FAMILY WILL BE GUARANTEED.

(4) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES ARE RETIRED WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT:- (SEE LAGOS 7255)

(5) ALSO, WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT, ALL THE PRESENT MILITARY GOVERNORS, AND THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EAST CENTRAL STATE, HAVE BEEN RELIEVED OF THEIR APPOINTMENTS AND RETIRED.

(6) AS YOU ARE ALREADY AWARE, NEW APPOINTMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE AS FOLLOWS:- (THE CHIEFS OF STAFF AND INSPECTOR GENERAL POLICE - LAGOS 7222)
NEW MILITARY GOVERNORS HAVE ALSO BEEN APPOINTED FOR THE STATES AS FOLLOWS:- (SEE LAGOS 7260)

THE STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RE-ORGANISED. THERE WILL NOW BE THREE ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT, AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL, NAMELY:-

(I) THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL:

(II) THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATES: AND

(III) THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

THERE WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO BE EXECUTIVE COUNCILS AT THE STATE LEVEL.

THE RECONSTITUTED SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL WILL COMPRISE THE FOLLOWING:- (SEE LAGOS 7260)

ALL CIVIL COMMISSIONERS IN THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ARE RELIEVED OF THEIR APPOINTMENT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT. THE COMPOSITION OF THE NEW COUNCIL WILL BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY.

POLITICAL PROGRAMME:

WE WILL REVIEW THE POLITICAL PROGRAMME AND MAKE AN UNCLASSIFIED

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ANNOUNCEMENT IN DUE COURSE. IN THE MEANTIME, A PANEL WILL BE SET UP TO ADVISE ON THE QUESTION OF NEW STATES. A PANEL WILL ALSO BE SET UP TO ADVISE ON THE QUESTION OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL.

WITH REGARD TO THE 1973 POPULATION CENSUS, IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT WHATEVER RESULTS ARE ANNOUNCED WILL NOT COMMAND GENERAL ACCEPTANCE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. IT HAS THEREFORE BEEN DECIDED TO CANCEL THE 1973 POPULATION COUNT. ACCORDINGLY, FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, THE 1963 CENSUS FIGURES SHALL CONTINUE TO BE USED.

A PANEL WILL BE SET UP TO ADVISE ON THE FUTURE OF THE INTERIM COMMON SERVICES AGENCY (ICSA) AND THE EASTERN STATES INTERIM ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AGENCY (ESIALA).

BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL:

THE SECOND WORLD BLACK AND AFRICAN FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CULTURE IS POSTPONED IN VIEW OF THE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN PROVIDING ALL THE NECESSARY FACILITIES. CONSULTATIONS WILL BE HELD WITH THE OTHER PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES WITH A VIEW TO FIXING A NEW DATE.

FINALLY, WE REAFFIRM THIS COUNTRY'S FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL COUNTRIES. FOREIGN NATIONALS LIVING IN NIGERIA WILL BE PROTECTED. FOREIGN INVESTMENTS WILL ALSO BE PROTECTED. THE GOVERNMENT WILL HONOUR ALL OBLIGATIONS ENTERED INTO BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS OF THE FEDERATION. WE WILL ALSO GIVE CONTINUED ACTIVE SUPPORT TO THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, THE TASK AHEAD OF US CALLS FOR SACRIFICE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE AT ALL LEVELS OF OUR SOCIETY. THIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT TOLERATE INDISCIPLINE. THIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT CONDONE ABUSE OF OFFICE.

I APPEAL TO YOU ALL TO COOPERATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN OUR ENDEAVOUR TO GIVE THIS NATION A NEW LEASE OF LIFE. THIS CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT SHEDDING ANY BLOOD: AND WE INTEND TO KEEP IT SO.
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LONG LIFE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA.
GOODNIGHT.

COMMENT: THERE STILL SOME UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHETHER ALL FEDERAL COMMISSIONERS HAVE BEEN RELIEVED OR ONLY CIVILIAN COMMISSIONERS. MOHAMMED USED TERM "CIVIL" BUT SOME OF PRESS INTERPRETS THIS AS MEANING ALL RPT ALL COMMISSIONERS. IN ANY CASE, TAKING COMMISSIONERS NOW APPOINTED TO SMC, GIVEN DIVISION COMMAND, OR DEFINITELY RETIRED, THE ASSIGNMENTS OF ONLY THREE COMMISSIONERS REMAIN IN DOUBT: BRIG. ADEFOPE--LABOR, COL. WUSHISHI--INDUSTRIES, AND LT. COL. ALI--EDUCATION.
CROSBY

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